

REMARKS

Claims 7-23 are pending, with Claims 7, 13, and 31 being independent. Claims 1-6, 24-25 and 29-33 have been cancelled without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter presented therein.

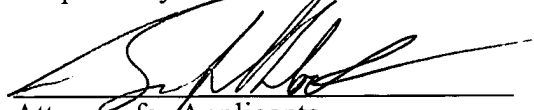
Claims 7, 8, 10, 13, 14, and 19-22 have been amended. No new matter has been added.

Claims 1-3, 24/1-3 and 31-33 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 1-03(a) as being unpatentable over JP 2000-249968 (Takagi).

In view of the foregoing, Applicants submit that all pending claims are allowed and this application remains in condition for allowance. Favorable consideration and early passage to issue are earnestly solicited.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,



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